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Is **JESUS**
really
necessary?



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Jesus—opinions about Him are sharply divided; the paths people take in life diverge greatly, too, depending on what they believe to be true about Him.

Was He simply one of many founders of a religion, a social reformer, or an exemplary man willing to die for His cause? If so, He could be readily ignored. If, however, He is the Son of God, who came from Heaven to give us eternal life through the cross and His resurrection, then He becomes the most significant person ever to live. Rejecting Him would have the most devastating consequence possible at the end of our days, namely the loss of eternal life.

- **Muslims** turn solely to **Allah** and strongly oppose Jesus being the son of God. Therefore, they never pray to Jesus.
- **Jehovah's Witnesses** exclusively direct their prayers to **Jehovah**; never to Jesus.

- The **Canadian Parliament** used to open with a prayer to Jesus. As a result of numerous protests, Jesus is no longer addressed in prayer, only God.
- The **Pharisees and scribes**—contemporaries of Jesus—turned against Him. They were offended at His claim to be the Son of God. They even accused Him of blasphemy when He called God His own Father, *“making himself equal with God”* (John 5:18). After this, they sought to take His life.

An unholy confusion surrounds the question, *“To whom should we pray?”* Fortunately, in God’s Word, the Bible, we find a very clear answer.

The Parana Bridge

I once stood at the shore of an extraordinarily wide river in Paraguay, the **Parana**. It originates in Brazil, is some 4,000 km long and, combined with the *Rio Uruguay*, forms the delta of the *Rio de la Plata*, with the massive flow rate of 18,000 m³/s—18,000 tonnes of water every second. Standing at the shore of the Parana River, you think you are standing in front of an enormous lake.

Now just imagine that God were on the opposite side of this immensely wide river, and we wanted to go to Him. The current is so strong that not even the best athlete would have the strength to swim across. Not only that, the abundant crocodiles would thwart every attempt to reach the other shore.

Similarly, there is no possible way we can make it on our own to God. So what does God do? He has a bridge built, and tells us, *“I have made a bridge for you to reach me. There is only one bridge! If you want to come to me, you must use that bridge, called Jesus; there is no other option!”*

Jesus is the only Saviour God has sent!

Jesus is the Saviour, sent by God the Father—that statement is verified often in the New Testament:

- *"She (Mary) will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).*
- *"For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him" (John 3:17).*
- *"I (= Jesus) am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved (John 10:9).*



- *"Whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life" (John 5:24).*

Especially provocative in today's multi-religious society are the words of Jesus in John 14:6: *"I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."* But it is precisely this sort of unambiguous clarity which is the hallmark of Jesus.

Jesus is God!

Is Jesus the Son of God or not? That is the most important question of all time, since our eternal destiny depends on it. Not even the most distinguished

scholar can answer that question for us, only God Himself in His Word. The following biblical statements (A1–A5) testify that Jesus is God:

A1: The power of Jesus: He forgives sins. Four men were determined to bring their lame friend to Jesus (Mark 2:1–12). There was no way to get to Jesus directly because of the huge crowd. So they made an opening in the roof and lowered the man down. Seeing this, Jesus said to him, *“Son, your sins are forgiven”* (v. 5). Some of the scribes witnessed this and wondered, *“Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?”* (Mark 2:7) They had correctly concluded from the Scripture that only God could forgive sins. They should have logically deduced: **He**, who is right in front of us, **must be God!**

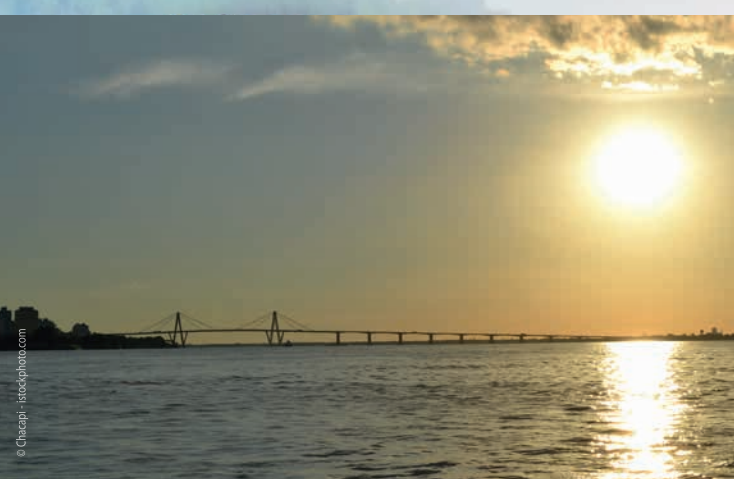
A2: The authority of Jesus: Jesus declared in John 5:19: *“Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise.”* The second part of Jesus’ answer—the assertion that everything the Father does, the Son can do likewise—shows unmistakably that Jesus is God. For who can do everything God does? Only someone who is **God Himself!**

A3: The worship of Jesus: According to Scripture, only God can be worshipped—no angel, no person, not Mary either, and no saints (Revelation 22:8, 9)! Jesus is worshipped in manifold ways. This verifies, without a doubt, that He is God:

- The **wise men from the east** came to worship Jesus. *“For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him ... and they fell down and worshiped him”* (Matthew 2:2, 11).
- While **Stephen** was being stoned he called out to Jesus, *“Lord Jesus, receive my spirit”* (Acts 7:59). He was granted a glimpse into Heaven, and saw Jesus standing at the right hand of God.

- When **Thomas** saw the risen Lord for the first time, he doubted if it really was Jesus. Yet once Thomas saw the nail marks in His hands and the scar on His side, he was convinced Jesus was God and worshipped Him: *"My Lord and my God"* (John 20:28).
- Of the **disciples** it is said, *"And they worshiped him (= Jesus) and returned to Jerusalem with great joy"* (Luke 24:52).
- According to Hebrews 1:6 the entire **realm of angels** worships Jesus: *"Let all God's angels worship him (Jesus)."* Even all creatures in heaven and on earth praise and **worship** the lamb (= Jesus): *"And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, 'To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!'"* (Revelation 5:13).

A4: The eternal existence of Jesus and His work in creation: The Gospel of John starts out like this (John 1:1–3): *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made."* The equality with God is made even clearer when we replace "the Word" with "Jesus". We





can do this since in verse 14 we are told that Jesus is the Word, therefore:

In the beginning was Jesus, and Jesus was with God, and **Jesus was God**. Jesus was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Jesus, and without Jesus was not any thing made that was made.

A5: Additional verses that confirm the deity of Jesus:

Romans 9:5: *"...Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen."* The 'amen' reinforces the statement further.

I John 5:20: *"... He is the true God and eternal life."* Jesus is thus God in person, and also eternal life in person!

Hebrews 1:8 (citing Psalm 45:6, which says, *"Your throne, O God, is forever and ever"* and is here directly applied to Jesus): *"But of the Son he says, 'Your throne, O God, is forever and ever ...'"*

Revelation 1:8: Who is it that says of Himself in Revelation 1:8: *"I am the Alpha and the Omega' says the Lord God, 'who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty'"*? It is our returning Lord, and without a doubt that is Jesus! This means that Jesus is *"the Lord God"*, and Jesus is *"the Almighty"*! Jesus is *"the Alpha and the Omega"*—He is the beginning and the end! In Revelation 15:3, too, in a song of praise to the glory of God, Jesus is proclaimed as the

Almighty God: *"And they sing ... the song of the Lamb, saying, 'Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty!'"*

Without Jesus, we don't have God the Father!

Some think it is enough to believe in God the Father, and to pray to Him. Is that what the Bible teaches though? A few passages shed light on that question.

- *"That all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him"* (John 5:23).
- *"No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also"* (I John 2:23).
- *"Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God"* (John 3:18).

Without Jesus, we don't have eternal life!

We can **only** get to God the Father and His heavenly kingdom through Jesus, our Lord. God himself decreed that we could only obtain eternal life through Jesus. That is why we read in Romans 3:25 (referring to the Lord Jesus Christ), *"whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith."*

The New Testament emphasizes further:

- Jesus is the only way to the Father: *"I (Jesus) am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me"* (John 14:6).
- Jesus is the only mediator between God, the Father, and us: *"For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus"* (I Timothy 2:5).
- Jesus is the only saviour: *"And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heav-*

en given among men by which we must be saved"
(Acts 4:12).

Let us reaffirm: In order to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven we need Jesus! No other way is possible. The question in our title, *"Is Jesus really necessary?"* can therefore be answered with a definite **YES**—He is absolutely essential! Not one of the other so-called 'saviours' fulfills the necessary qualifications except Jesus. He is the one and only Saviour of the world.



How do I cross the bridge?

Back to the Parana bridge mentioned earlier, imagine a hiker who comes across the walkway leading to this bridge, a banner over it proclaiming it as 'Jesus'. He has heard that there are other bridges. So he sets off downriver and finds several other walkways with labels such as: Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jehovah's Witnesses They all look as if crossing might be possible, yet after a few metres they each come to an end, and the other shore of the wide river remains out of reach. Then he finally decides to step onto the **only actual bridge**.

In John 16:9 Jesus talks about the greatest transgression, which so many commit, namely the sin that *"they do not believe in me"*. This reflects the exclusionary nature of the Kingdom of God. Yet you can

overcome this, even today, if—figuratively speaking—you were to right now walk across the bridge called **'Jesus'**. This means that you turn to Him in prayer and become a follower of His. In your own words, say a prayer similar to this one, addressing the Saviour, Jesus:

"Lord Jesus Christ, I realize the lost situation I am in because until now I have lived and acted without you. I am deeply distressed about that and plead with you to help me. Please forgive all the wrong things I have done in my life. Till now, my way of life was wrong because I have lived for myself, but from now on I want to follow your path. I invite you to come into my life. Please give me a desire to read your Word and get to know ever more about you, and then help me put into practice what I learn. I thank you with my whole heart that you have freed me from all my sin and that because of you I can now be God's child forever. Amen."

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